

# Kuroki 'Takes' Heart Mountain



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## Secretary Ickes Accuses LaGuardia, 2 Governors Of 'Racial' Discrimination

WASHINGTON—Interior Secretary Ickes Thursday accused Mayor Fiorello H. LaGuardia of New York City and two Republican governors, John W. Bricker of Ohio and Walter E. Edge of New Jersey, of "racial discrimination" on the question of resettlement of Japanese-Americans according to the Associated Press.

In a statement the interior secretary said they have expressed a belief that law-abiding Japanese in this country are not entitled to the same privileges as non-Japanese, and said these opinions "seem ominously out of tune in a nation that is fighting for the principles of democracy and freedom."

"This is a strange fife and drum corps to be playing the discordant anthem of racial discrimination," Ickes said. "Stranger by far than fiction."

"The mayor of New York City, who has fought long and vigorously for racial equality and justice, carrying the flag, must be shocked and disturbed to find the drummer boy from New Jersey on his left and the fifer from Ohio flanking him on the right. I cannot but believe that he has joined this company through accident and misunderstanding rather than by deliberate choice."

Ickes, upholding the policies of the war relocation authority

which recently was made a part of his department, accused Bricker "not only of prejudice but of disregard of the facts" in a Los Angeles speech the Ohio governor made last week. He said Bricker was "trying to further his presidential aspirations" and that he "deliberately kicked the Constitution in the teeth."

The secretary quoted Bricker as saying that after the war each west coast community should determine for itself whether people of Japanese ancestry should be permitted to return to their former homes, and of charging the war relocation authority with releasing disloyal persons.

"The governor didn't know what he was talking about," Ickes declared.

He said LaGuardia has protested against the relocation of persons of Japanese ancestry in New York City, "apparently on the theory that these people are dangerous and subversive. Actually there

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## Community Celebration Features Visit of Hero

T/Sgt. Ben Kuroki, a Nebraska farm boy who blazed his name in the ternal halls of fame from the turret position of a Liberator bomber over Europe, Africa and the Middle East, this week literally captured Heart Mountain residents.

During a full week, the sergeant was feted at receptions, meetings, dances and various functions and generally smothered by autograph-seekers, admiring youths and swooning girls. Issei, as well as the young people, offered their respect to the young air force member.

The climax of a week crammed with activities honoring Sergeant Kuroki was the mass meeting Thursday night when approximately 1,000 persons filled the high school auditorium to hear his message and witness the presentation of tokens of recognition by The Sentinel and USO.

Center morale reached an all-time high during the sergeant's visit, according to community leaders.

Speaking informally before many of the groups, Sergeant Kuroki impressed his listeners with his modesty and sincerity. He refused to talk of his record in combat flying which brought him two coveted Distinguished Flying Crosses with four oak leaf clusters, the air medal and other recognitions of his intrepidity.

Arriving at Heart Mountain Monday afternoon as the guest of the community council, the sergeant was received at a public reception at the administration flag pole where thousands of residents gave him an inspiring greeting. That night he was the honored guest of the council at 14-27.

During the following days he was entertained by the young people's club, parents' group, appointed personnel and greeted both the grammar schools and high school. He was entertained by The Sentinel staff, the community activities group, the Boy Scouts, USO hostesses, the KeY Men and others. Tomorrow morning he will visit both the Buddhist and Christian churches.

Boy and Girl Scouts will be in charge of his send-off Sunday at 4:30 p. m. From Heart Mountain Sergeant Kuroki will travel to Hunt, Idaho, where he will visit at the Minidoka relocation center.

Sergeant Kuroki is the first and only, so far as can be learned, nisei to win such signal honors in the field of combat.

Sergeant Kuroki was known as the "Most Honorable Son" of the Eager Beaver squadron of Brig. Gen. Ted Timberlake's Flying Circus.

Besides his bombing mission to the Ploesti oil fields in Rumania, considered one of the most daring of the entire war, Sergeant Kuroki also carried out missions to Wilhelmshaven, Bordeaux, Danzig, Vegesack, Munster and La Pallice in Europe and aided in chasing Rommel out of Africa.

## Ben Kuroki Average American Despite Brave Achievements

By HIME OKUBO

Sgt. Ben Kuroki is just another average American boy. Despite the honor and fame bestowed upon this outstanding nisei war hero, the tall, dark, rugged top turret gunner rolled out of bed at 7 a.m. and cheerfully submitted to an early morning interview.

Bewildered that he should be the center of such wide-spread interest, he modestly shied away from talk of himself. "No paper has carried much of my personal life," he said and laughed.

The 25-year old sergeant, reared in Hershey, Neb., a few miles from his birth place of Gothenburg, comes from a family of five girls and five boys. A typical Nebraska farm boy, even to an occasional slip of dialect, the five months of fame since his return from combat duty has not affected him and he spoke proudly of his family and the hardships of farming during his childhood.

His small almond eyes sparkled as he spoke of an anticipated furlough he hoped to spend with his folks before fu-

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## Sergeant Busy Signing Name

About one-fourth of Heart Mountain's 9,000 residents are this week proudly admiring their signatures of Sergeant Ben Kuroki.

With all the excitement of a Hollywood premier, men and women, young and old, crowded around the air hero at each of his appearances during the week hopefully holding out every conceivable object for his autograph.

Giddy-eyed girls, their hearts turning flip-flops, shyly produced pictures of Kuroki, clipped from The Sentinel and neatly mounted on paper or in autograph albums, for his signature.

An old Issei gentleman, hesitantly approached the sergeant and asked him to autograph a picture of his boy in uniform. "He's leaving for overseas with the 442nd Combat team," he explained.

"In that case, I'll use my own pen," Kuroki told him.

To the nisei, Kuroki is their first national hero. They experienced for the first time the meaning of hero worship.

## Service Mothers Praise Kuroki, Express Pride in Sons' Action

By KAY KUSHINO

Gray-haired parents of nisei servicemen scattered now to the four corners of the globe were rewarded this week when Sgt. Ben Kuroki, veteran of 30 air raids over the African, Middle East and European terrain, met with them at the Y's Haven to explain in his halting Japanese, the conditions and attitudes of those who are serving America in other lands.

Many of these parents, bewildered and confused with the turn of events in the last three years, but all of them proud to see their sons serve, were gratified and reassured to learn that despite the hardships and travail of warfare, their children were meeting adverse conditions with an open mind and would be given every consideration and respect from fellow-soldiers.

Following his appearance, many of the mothers gathered in small circles to air their opinions.

Mrs. Chiyo Fujioke, mother of one son in the armed forces and another awaiting induction, said, "I am proud that my son is in the army. Sergeant Kuroki's enlightening speech tonight convinces me more than ever that my children are doing the right thing. I respect and admire him for all that he is and stands

for."

Deeply touching is the statement made by Mrs. Kikuyo Sakaguchi, mother of six children, one of whom is already serving and with other sons now eligible. "My eldest son is already in the army, and when the time comes, I will be more than happy to see my other boys enter the service," she said. "It will mean inconvenience and hardship for me but Sergeant Kuroki's talk tonight has made me feel that it is a deep honor." Mrs. Sakaguchi has lost her husband.

Mrs. Sumi Oka, whose only son has just gone across with the 442nd battalion, remarked, "Sergeant Kuroki has deeply imbedded in his soul the same spirit of intense patriotism that personified the warriors of old Japan, people who put honor and love of country above personal thought or gain. Although I am a pacifist, I am proud to have a son in the armed forces."

The mother of two sons in the armed forces, Mrs. Hisako Tanouye, commented, "It was too fleeting an instance to draw hasty conclusions but I got the impression that Sergeant Kuroki is a true American, and his courage and heroism under continuous fire will be an inspiration to all."